

I hasten to add, Mr. Speaker, that the United States and its military have no moral authority to combat such gruesome tactics. Why? Because the right to torture prisoners of war, indeed, the exhortation to torture them, was the official policy of our government for several years.

Of course, the minimum requirement of a functioning society in Iraq will be some kind of trustworthy law enforcement system. But with insurgents and militia groups having infiltrated the police, Iraqi citizens have absolutely no recourse, no legitimate authority committed to their safety and their security.

Another recent article, this one from the Washington Post, tells of a Baghdad resident who dialed the Iraqi equivalent of 911 after a Shiite militia, called the Mahdi Army, firebombed a local mosque. The call went through to the ministry of interior, which is allied with the Shiia and its militias. The dispatcher told the man that he, the caller, was a terrorist, said the Mahdi Army was just doing its job, and hung up. How is that for freedom on the march?

Mr. Speaker, rather than bringing stability and rule of law to Iraq, it has turned out that we have a chaotic killing field, a hot bed of terror over there. The only law that seems to apply is the law of the jungle. The streets are controlled by thugs and murderers. The Iraqi Government is impotent at best, complicit at worst. They are in a civil war.

The least we can do is remove our soldiers from this inferno. Bringing the troops home will not be a panacea for Iraq, but it will get Americans out of harm's way while we help facilitate the long, arduous process of Iraqi reconstruction and reconciliation.

Iraq cannot be put back together again as long as we persist with a military occupation. Every day that our soldiers are there makes it harder, not easier. Every day that the occupation continues, we move further away from, not closer to, the kind of democratic society President Bush says he wants in Iraq.

Bring the troops home. It is the right thing to do for America, and it may be Iraq's only hope for peace and stability.

□ 1800

TURN OUT THE LIGHTS: THE PARTY IS OVER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHENRY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, Americans are fed up. They are worn out, burned out and pocketed out of taking care of illegals who come here and expect a handout and a free ride, and now Americans, they are speaking out.

Recently, taxpayers in Houston forked out over \$125 million in hospital

costs in just 1 year by treating more than 53,000 illegals, taking advantage of the system in our hospitals, taking advantage of Americans, and really taking advantage of legal immigrants.

Mr. Speaker, it is morally wrong for illegals to enter this country with the expectation that they will live off of others. It is morally wrong for them to expect that Americans will pay to take care of them, take care of their health costs, their education costs and their social services costs.

But now it is becoming illegal for illegals to get these services that even many Americans do not receive. Taxpayers are finding their own answers, while some Federal lawmakers in Washington remain deaf to their desire because they are too busy dueling over illegal immigration doctrines.

State leaders are stepping in across the country. Just this week in Colorado lawmakers took a cue from their citizens by cutting through the conflict and passed 11 bipartisan bills, taking a tougher stance on illegal entry.

Just like Houston, illegals have been drawn to Colorado like moths to a flame, and like many States, Colorado has left the porch light on for them because they have bad laws that encourage illegal entry such as laws that protect employers that hire illegals, providing illegals benefits that many Americans do not receive such as unemployment, grants and even medical care.

This may explain why half of Colorado's immigrants are illegal, but those days may be over because now State legislators are aiming to flip the switch and turn out the lights and turn off the benefits that make being illegal so lucrative.

This week, they passed 11 immigration bills, including making people prove that they are legal residents of Colorado in order to receive State and Federal benefits. That is a far-reaching requirement which will require many of those 1 million people to prove that they are in the State legally to receive benefits. Without that proof, they lose the benefits that Americans have to pay for because Americans always pay, always pay for illegal entry.

Illegals will lose unemployment checks, grants to pay energy bills and even some public medical care, and even applying for these perks means a monetary punishment to illegals.

They are also now busting business owners who, until recently, have left their own porch lights on, guiding illegals their way in the name of a bigger bottom line. Those businesses who exploit illegals make a profit off of cheap labor, but Americans pick up the tab for all social services. Now, they are going to lose a grip on that filthy lucre that they have gotten.

Businesses that exploit those already living in the shadows of our society, beyond the scope of Federal work and wage regulations, it will cost those illicit businesses money in the form of fines if they do not keep records proving that they hire only legal residents.

And while many Americans do not turn out at the polls, it seems some illegals find some way to vote in this country, and now it is going to be a felony if they do so.

And while Colorado legislators have been hard at work, they are letting the voters make the really tough decisions. They are asking them in November on the ballot if they should sue the Federal Government for not enforcing Federal immigration laws. Voters will also be asked to deny tax benefits to business owners who hire illegals.

Mr. Speaker, each day my office gets inundated with calls, e-mails and faxes of people demanding their voices be heard, demanding we secure the borders, demanding that government enforce the law, and demanding that government uphold its greatest responsibility, protecting the citizens.

Mr. Speaker, the bills are mounting up. Illegals have run up their tab. Now it's time we turn out the lights because, Mr. Speaker, the party is over.

And that's just the way it is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

RECENT ACTIVITIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to claim my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from West Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I do not understand the motives behind all the actors involved in recent actions in the Middle East. I do not condone kidnappings, murders, terrorist acts whether in a military zone or across borders, whether as an act of resistance or whatever the terms are that one uses.

I do feel I understand somewhat the feelings of an oppressed, occupied people who have been treated less than human and who now, through no actions or fault of their own, are being bombed back to the Stone Age.

Not only are innocent civilians losing their lives as we speak, but also vital support systems, services and infrastructure needed for day-to-day living are being bombed hourly.

Also in severe jeopardy of losing its life is the new pro-American, pro-democracy government of the land of my grandfathers, Lebanon. Only a year and a half ago, as we all will recall, the Cedar Revolution brought such new life and new hope for this country.

The Lebanese Government has little knowledge nor collusion with, nor agreement with what the military wing of Hezbollah does. They have condemned these recent actions, as I have